

a non-fiberized polymeric matrix wherein said particulate is substantially immobilized within said polymeric matrix[;]
and

[a selectively permeable skin on] wherein the outer surface of said membrane comprises a selectively permeable skin.

37 (Amended). [A flexible composite] The membrane of Claim 1 comprising a selected quantity of a polymeric material and a selected quantity of fine particles[, said membrane comprising a polymeric matrix wherein said particles are substantially immobilized within said polymeric matrix, and] wherein the majority of said particles have a diameter less than about 20 [μ] μ m.

Please add the following new claims 40-45.

40 (New). The membrane of Claim 1 wherein said membrane comprises a contoured sheet.

41 (New). The membrane of Claim 40 wherein said membrane comprises a rippled sheet.

42 (New). The membrane of Claim 40 wherein said membrane comprises a pleated sheet.

43 (New). The membrane of Claim 1 further comprising a coating of a hydrophilizing agent.

44 (New). A flexible, composite membrane comprising a selected quantity of a polymeric material blended with a selected quantity of a particulate material wherein the quantity of said particulate material comprises greater than 50%, by weight, of the blend, said membrane further comprising:

a non-fiberized polymeric matrix wherein said particulate is substantially immobilized within said matrix and wherein the outer surface of said membrane comprises a selectively permeable skin.

45 (New). The membrane of Claim 44 wherein said membrane is deposited on a polymeric support.

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action of August 3, 1999. In that Office Action, Claims 12-36 were withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to a restriction requirement. Applicants hereby affirm the election to prosecute Claims 1-11 and 37-39.

In addition, Claims 1-7, 9-11 and 37-39 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Hagen et al.;

Claims 1-5, 7-11 and 37-38 were rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Mahendran et al.;

Claims 1-7, 9-11 and 37-39 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Pall et al.;

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Pall et al. and as being unpatentable over Hagen et al.

By this Amendment, Claim 1 has been amended and Claim 37 has been made dependent on Claim 1. Claims 9, 38 and 39 have been cancelled and new Claims 40-45 have been added. For the reasons set forth below, Applicants submit that all of the pending claims